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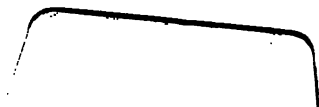


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FRANCIS PARKMAN.

A Sketch.

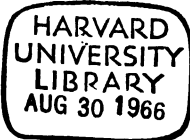
BY

O. B. FROTHINGHAM.

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FRANCIS PARKMAN, LL.D.

FRANCIS PARKMAN was born in Somerset Place (now Allston Street) September 16, 1823. When he was four years old the family moved to Green Street, next to the handsome, large house on Bowdoin Square, with a green before it, shaded by chestnut-trees, and a garden behind on Chardon Street. This house was built by Samuel Parkman, the grandfather (taxed in 1822 on \$150,000, the same as Gardiner Greene and P. C. Brooks). When his widow died, the house in Bowdoin Square was occupied by Rev. Dr. Parkman's family. In 1854 the mother of Francis rented it to the United States Government for a court-house, and as such it was used for three years; then it was sold and pulled down. In the mean time she and her family lived in a hired house on Walnut Street. The house in Chestnut Street was bought by the mother of Francis in 1864, and she died at Jamaica Plain in the summer of 1871. The great-grandfather, born in Boston, was a minister at Westborough, Mass. "It is worth mentioning," says Mr. Lowell (in the "Century" for November, 1892), "that a son of this clergyman, at the age of seventeen, served as private in the Massachusetts Regiment, during that 'Old French War,' as it used to be called, to which his grand-nephew has given a deeper meaning, and which he has made alive to us again in all its varied picturesqueness of hardihood and adventure. Another of his sons, returning to Boston, became a successful merchant there, a man of marked character and public spirit, whose fortune, patiently acquired in the wise fashion of those days, would have secured for his grandson a life of lettered ease, had he not made a nobler choice of spending it in strenuous

literary labor. One of this merchant's sons, a clergyman, was our author's father. . . . Energy of character and aptitude for culture were a natural inheritance from such ancestors, and both have been abundantly illustrated in the life of their descendant." This last passage may be true, but it is quite idle to pry into the secrets of heredity in the present case. Nothing but general predisposition can be discovered. Mr. Parkman's personality was so unique, his character was so exceptional, his experience so unusual, his taste so extraordinary, his talent so peculiar, that the line of inheritance seems to be all but broken. His positive traits were derived apparently from his mother, especially his moral qualities.

Her name was Caroline, daughter of Nathaniel Hall of Medford. She had by marriage six children, of whom Francis was the eldest, and two, sisters, still survive. She was a fine example of the best type of the New England woman. It must be remembered that Boston at that time was a small place; social lines were sharply drawn; there were few excitements of any kind; no great "causes" or "movements" agitated men. The question of "woman's rights" was hardly, if at all, raised; and it was entertained by a class of women who were then considered out of the pale of respectable regard. The consequence was that the life of ladies was very quiet and domestic. She was a Unitarian by inheritance, but quite uninterested in speculative or dogmatic matters. Her whole endeavor was to cultivate the Christian virtues and to exemplify the Christian graces as well as she could. With questions of doctrine, she did not concern herself, and took no part in the controversies that were raging around her, though she had a profound respect for spiritual things and an undoubting faith in the cardinal principles of religion. Her devotion to her husband and children was with her a sacred duty. Humility, charity, truthfulness, were her prime characteristics. Her conscience was firm and lofty, though never austere. She had a strong sense of right, coupled with perfect charity toward other people; inflexible in principle, she was gentle in practice. Intellectually she could hardly be called brilliant or accomplished, but she had a strong vein of common-sense and practical wisdom, great penetration into character, and a good deal of quiet humor. She loved her home and never wanted

to leave it, and put into it an amount of consecration which would have glorified a more extended sphere. She did not try to shine socially, but she had a large circle of friends, who were much attached to her. Her distinguished son resembled her in many respects,—looking like her more and more as he grew older.

The father, Rev. Dr. Parkman, was, in his way, a remarkable man,—not a great man, not a distinguished man, not a powerful or impressive man, but a cultivated and attractive one. He was graduated at Harvard College, studied theology under the Rev. William E. Channing, contributed a series of papers on moral and religious subjects to one of the Boston journals, was one of the first to visit England, heard medical lectures in Edinburgh, attended theological lectures given by Dr. Ritchie, then Professor of Theology there, read a discourse which received the approbation of the professor, preached in London, was invited to become the associate minister with Mr. Lewin in Liverpool, preached in the First Church, Boston, and in 1813 was ordained pastor of the “New North” Church. In 1829, he founded the Professorship of Pulpit Eloquence and the Pastoral Care in the Theological Department of Harvard College, and took an active part in the concerns of the Society for the Relief of Aged and Indigent Clergymen, which was formed in 1849. He was a man of various information, kindly spirit, simple and yet polished manners. Dr. Isaac Hurd wrote of him:—

“He was a diligent and successful student, moral and exemplary in his whole deportment. He discovered a strong desire for knowledge and an aptitude to avail himself of all the means which presented for general improvement. . . . Nor can I forget the uniform benevolence with which he regarded all around him. It seemed to give him pain to pass a beggar in the street without opening his hand in charity.”

The Rev. F. D. Huntington (then a Unitarian minister, now Bishop of Central New York) says:—

“Every aspect of suffering touched him tenderly. There was no hard spot in his breast. His house was the centre of countless mercies to various forms of want; and there were few solicitors of alms, local or itinerant, and whether for private necessity or public benefactions, that his doors did not welcome and send away satisfied. . . . The processes of his mind were practical, however, rather than speculative.

His style was not wanting in force, but distinguished rather for clearness and ease. . . . For many years he has been widely known and esteemed for his efficient interest in some of our most conspicuous and useful institutions of philanthropy. Among these I may especially mention the Massachusetts Bible Society, the Society for Propagating the Gospel, the Orphan Asylum, the Humane Society, the Medical Dispensary, the Society for the Relief of Aged and Destitute Clergymen, and the Congregational Charitable Society. . . . Harvard University, of which he was an Overseer and frequent visitor, was very near to his heart, and its concerns touched his personal pride. Throughout he was a zealous and constant friend of the Unitarian movement, but was too Catholic in his feelings to favor an exclusive policy towards any Christian sect."

Mr. Edwin P. Whipple said of him : —

"Whether he conversed on theology or politics or manners or individual character, or recorded some sad or pleasant experience of his own, the wise and genial humorist was always observable, softening, enlivening, enriching everything he touched; his practical discernments were so sure and keen, his knowledge of the world was so extensive, and his perception of character and motives was so quick and deep that it was impossible to impose on him by any pretence or deception. . . . It was impossible to meet Dr. Parkman in the street or stop a minute to exchange words with him without carrying away with you some phrase or turn of thought so exquisite in its mingled sagacity and humor that it touched the inmost sense of the ludicrous and made the heart smile as well as the lips."

And Mr. Lowell says : —

"He still survives in traditions of an abundant and excellent humor, provoked to wilder hazards and set in stronger relief (as in Sterne) by the decorum of his cloth."

When he died (November 12, 1852) the Boston Association celebrated him as "one who loved his calling and discharged all its duties with untiring devotedness. As a preacher he was practical and evangelical; as a pastor tender and affectionate. He was a man of active and useful charities, a friend to learning, a punctual member or an energetic officer of many literary, philanthropic, and religious associations, as well as a true friend of the worthy poor. He 'loved the brethren'; he was 'given to hospitality,' 'distributing to the necessities of saints.'" Ephraim Peabody, D.D., minister of King's Chapel,

paid to him the best of tributes when he spoke of him as particularly kind to the unattractive.

The son had, from the beginning, an extremely sensitive physical system. In his fragment of autobiography, he speaks of "an inborn irritability of constitution which required gentler treatment than I gave it. . . . My childhood was neither healthful nor buoyant. . . . It was impossible that conditions of the nervous system abnormal as mine had been from infancy, should be without their effects on the mind, and some of these were of a nature highly to exasperate me. This subterranean character of the mischief, early declaring itself at the surface, doubtless increased its intensity, while it saved it from being a nuisance to those around." At eight years of age, being then delicate, he was sent to the farm of his maternal grandfather in Medford, near an extensive tract of wild and rough woodland, called the Middlesex Fells. This tract, which used to be called the "Five-Mile Woods," lies within the bounds of five municipalities,—Medford, Malden, Winchester, Stoneham, and Melrose. It encloses "Spot Pond," which covers an area of two hundred and ninety acres, the entire region containing about four thousand. The highest eminence,— "Bear Hill,"—near the upper end of the pond, three hundred and twenty-five feet in elevation, has been taken for use as a park by the town of Stoneham. The whole district abounds in hills, ponds, pools, crags, and is admirably suited for park purposes. The latest history of Medford (Usher's) speaks of it as of volcanic origin, once covered with primeval forests, and later divided into farms, tilled, and, of course, inhabited. There are no remains of this now. The land looks as if it had been always neglected. In fact, it is not easy to see how anything like cultivation was ever possible, so rocky is it, so thin is the soil, so narrow are the interstices between the stones. There are no traces of human habitation,—no ruins, no cellars even. There are stone walls, but they only mark the boundary of wood lots. The forest, infested with small animals, and the deep mould of decaying vegetation, merely suggest the wilderness. The lower end of the Fells was but a few rods from Mr. Hall's land, so that an active boy could easily penetrate the woods, which, in Parkman's childhood, must have been ragged and tangled enough for a savage. Indeed, except that there were no In-

dians and no wild beasts, all the features of the waste existed. Four years spent in such a neighborhood were quite sufficient to form a taste for rude nature. Twice a day he walked about a mile to a school in Medford, Mr. John Angier's, which I recollect as an excellent school, though it was unsuited to a lad who was fond of collecting eggs, reptiles, and insects, of trapping squirrels and woodchucks, and attempting to kill birds. He lived mainly in the woods, an out-of-door life, learned all about trees and flowers, and contracted a taste for woodland scenery which only grew with his growth. He spoke of these days, in after life, as being among the pleasantest in his experience. After four years spent in the country, he was brought back to Boston; and this was the time when he practised, so disastrously, the experiments in chemistry which simply injured him. That he had any vigor left is a marvel; for chemicals are dangerous things for boys to play with. After this, being rather depressed and pale in appearance, in a low state of health, as he afterwards acknowledged, the quiet and modest boy, still and reserved, went to Chauncy Place School. When he entered, it is impossible to say, because the earliest records were destroyed in the great fire of 1872; but he was there in 1837, and had evidently come there, says his teacher, with the intention of learning and doing the best he could for himself. He was even then ambitious, and soon was able to join the class that was preparing to enter Harvard College in 1840. He was a good general scholar, especially interested in English composition and the proper use of the English language. Mr. William Russell, a Scotchman of learning and culture, was at that time teaching those branches at Chauncy Hall. Young Parkman availed himself to the utmost of his instructions, and derived great advantage from them. He used to amuse himself at this period with versifying stories of heroic achievement, which seemed to have a great fascination for him; thus he threw into rhyme the "Tournament" in Scott's "Ivanhoe," afterward using it for school declamation. Some portions of the "Eneid" of Virgil were treated in the same way. From Chauncy Hall School he went directly to Harvard College, graduating in the class of 1844. Already, in his Freshman year, according to the biography written for "McClure's Magazine" for January, 1894, "he spent a summer vacation in northern New Hampshire, making the ascent

of Mount Washington in 1841 by the Crawford bridge path, and then proceeding to the Connecticut lakes. From that point, he and a classmate and a native guide pushed on forty-five miles through the unbroken wilderness until they came to the headwaters of the Magalloway River. Where they struck it, it was a mere brook, not more than six feet wide; and the only way in which they could reach civilization again was to descend the stream. They constructed a canoe of birch bark which they lost in the rapids, and a raft which they then built was torn in pieces in the same way. They passed through some rough experiences; but Parkman, then in his eighteenth year, was vigorous and hardy beyond his years, and did not know fear."

In his Sophomore year his plans had already crystallized into a scheme of writing the story of what was then known as the "Old French War," that is, the war that ended in the conquest of Canada. The plan was afterwards enlarged so as to take in the whole course of the contest in America between France and England. He was a fair scholar at Cambridge, though not a distinguished one, his interest in the college studies being overruled by his own historical pursuits. His vacations were spent mostly in Canada or in the woods of Maine, which he visited again and again and became perfectly familiar with. He is said to have passed a whole month in exploring Lake George, admiring its picturesque banks, scaling its mountains, and studying all the historic places, the battle-fields where French, English, and savages shed so much blood to so little purpose. In his Junior year he received an injury, which obliged him to go to Europe. No one knows exactly the nature of the misfortune he met with. Some say it was a trouble with his eyes that disabled him; others affirm that he met with an accident in the gymnasium at Cambridge which occasioned a disorder of the heart. This hardly seems possible, considering the exposures, the long walks, the mountain climbing, the repeated ascensions to the top of cathedral churches in Italy, Paris, London, such as Milan and St. Paul's, which none but a strong man could undertake. At all events, he was sent abroad for his health. He sailed in a packet-ship to Gibraltar, and though miserably seasick, he could admire the waves, the color of the water, and the hues of the dolphin. "It was a noble sight," he says in his diary, "when at intervals the sun

broke out over the savage waves, changing their blackness to a rich blue almost as dark ; while the foam that flew over it seemed like whirling snow-wreaths on the mountain." Again, " As soon as it was day break, I went on deck. Two or three sails were set, the vessel scouring along, leaning over so that her lee gunwale scooped up the water ; the water in a foam, and clouds of spray flying over us, frequently as high as the main yard. The spray was driven with such force that it pricked the cheek like needles. I stayed on deck two or three hours, when, being thoroughly salted, I went down, changed my clothes, and read ' Don Quixote,' till Mr. Snow appeared at the door with, ' You are the man that wants to see a gale, are ye ? Now is your chance ; only just come up on deck.' Accordingly I went. The wind was yelling and howling in the rigging in a fashion that reminded me of a storm in a Canadian forest. . . . The sailors clung, half-drowned, to whatever they could lay hold of, for the vessel was, at times, half inverted, and tons of water washed from side to side of her deck." This shows the resolution, courage, patience, wild joyousness of the man.

Arrived at Gibraltar, he visited all the scenes ; was tireless in exploring the fortress and the town. From thence he sailed to Malta. He was there but a few hours, yet long enough to get an impression of the island. Then he went to Sicily, saw all the chief towns, and even the little villages, going through the whole island, in fact, over the roughest passes and roads, undaunted by fatigue, weather, bad inns, hard fare or none at all, intractable guides, and ignorance of the language, always enchanted by the scenery, and delighted to get upon a high point which commanded a view. From Sicily he journeyed to Naples, where the old passion for sight-seeing was renewed. He ascended Vesuvius with Theodore Parker, went as far as he could into the crater, drank Falernian wine, traversed what was called the " Old Town," " where the streets are seldom more than ten feet wide and often not half so large, though the ancient stone houses rise to six and eight stories " ; penetrated to a quarter of the city " inhabited exclusively by three thousand ladies whom the policy and morality of Ferdinand keeps close prisoners, a place very edifying and curious to look at " ; attended the great theatre San Carlo, but was more interested in the small ones where the people went, the chief comic

theatres where "Pulcinella" was to be seen. Little is said of the great Museum, and nothing of the beautiful Bay. From Naples he went to Rome, which he explored with his usual diligence, but the sight of which does not seem greatly to have impressed him. He writes in his diary, "I would not give a — for all the churches and ruins in Rome; at least, such are my sentiments at present. There is an unbounded sublimity in the Colosseum by moonlight, — that cannot be denied. St. Peter's, too, is a miracle in its way, but I would give them all for one ride on horseback among the Apennines."

The indomitable youth went everywhere, and saw everything. As, when in Naples, he visited the environs, — Pompeii, Posilippo, Baia, the tomb of Virgil, — so in Rome, there was not a famous spot that did not attract his notice. He rode with Mr. and Mrs. Parker to Tivoli, then on donkey back climbed up to Albano, far above the lake, the waters of which, black as ink, looked deep and sullen far below. He circled round among rocks and woods till he came to the old, large, gloomy convent, which Mr. Parkman wanted to enter in order to study for a few days, from the inside, the life of the Roman Catholic priests. "The superior came out of his cell like a rat out of his hole. I told him what I wanted. He said he was very sorry, but the rules of his order would not allow him to receive me without permission from his Superior in Rome." So he walked over to the Lake of Nemi. Returning to Rome, he went to the monastery of the Capuchins for permission to stay there. This was peremptorily refused; "but the Passionists told me to come again at night, and they would tell me if I could be admitted. I came as directed and was shown a room in the middle of the building. . . . The secret of my getting in so easily was explained. There were about thirty Italians retired from the world, preparing for the general confession." The Passionists, it must be understood, were the strictest order of monks, wearing the hair shirt and scourging themselves with whips loaded with iron. He gave a description of his few days at the convent in "Harper's Magazine" for August, 1890, but in the diary he tells of the efforts to convert him, and the horror with which the lay Italians looked upon him as a Protestant heretic; and when he told a brother that he was a Unitarian, great was the dismay. But he learned his lesson, and learned it well. The convent was near the Colosseum,

and as he looked out of the window of his cell (contrary to orders, by the way), the ruins, in all their majesty, rose before him. He came out just at the beginning of Holy Week, of which he speaks very disrespectfully thus: "These ceremonies of Holy Week, about which so much is said, would not be worth seeing, were it not for the crowd of people they draw together." Nevertheless, he entered fully into the ceremonies and saw all the shows that were exhibited. He visited several of the studios, and was particularly struck with the paintings of the German Overbeck, who was living then in Rome, — his works scarcely more than sketches, but "vivid and expressive, and clearly revealing the earnest, devout character of the artist." He was several weeks in this city, and says in his journal: "I have now been three or four weeks in Rome; have been presented to his Holiness the Pope; have visited churches, convents, cemeteries, catacombs, common sewers, including the Cloaca Maxima, and the ten thousand works of art. This will I say of Rome, that a place on every account more interesting, and which has a more vivifying and quickening influence on the faculties, could not be found on the face of the earth, — or, at least, I should not wish to go to it if it could." From Rome, he proceeded by diligence to Florence, where in a few days he found time to run through the picture galleries, see the churches, admire the scenery. Then he passed, by Bologna, Modena, Parma, to Milan. At Milan he went all over the Cathedral, descending to the shrine of Cardinal Borromeo, ascending to the roof, and thought the church quite worthy to be compared with St. Peter's. Thence he travelled to the Lake of Como, which he described in words that are quite worth quoting: "I have seen nothing at home or abroad more beautiful than this lake. It reminds me of Lake George, — the same extent, the same figure, the same crystal purity of waters, the same wild and beautiful mountains on either side. But the comparison will not go further. There are a hundred palaces and villages scattered along the water's edge and up the delicious declivities. There is none of that shaggy, untamed aspect in the mountains, — no piles of rocks grown over with stunted bushes or half-decayed logs. There are none of those little islands, covered with rough and moss-grown pine-trees, which give a certain savage character to the beauties of Lake George. All here is like a finished picture; even the wildest

rocks seem softened in the air of Italy. Give me Lake George and the smell of the pine and fir!" This love of wild nature, fostered in his boyhood and rising to a passion in his early manhood, gaining full control over the literary pursuits in which he was engaged, and in college adding a purpose to his study of the great masters of English speech, clung to him all through his journeyings. He was enamoured of powerful, massive, striking things, — the mountains of the Waldstatter See, the Rhine at Basle, the Alps from the Arch in Milan. His passion for the Indians and Indian life is curious. At the little village of Civitella, he entertains his landlord with tales of Indian life; at Modena he finds a translation of Cooper's "Last of the Mohicans"; all through Sicily, he discovers translations of Cooper's works, and in London, he makes immediately for Catlin's Museum of Indian curiosities. Its glory, alas, had departed, and the hall where it had been placed was occupied, to his immense disgust, by "Gen." Tom Thumb, who was strutting up and down a platform, singing very big songs in a very small voice, and amusing crowds of idle people. From Como, he went to Splügen and Zurich; from there to Basle and Strasburg, on his way to Paris. Of Paris he says little. The following is the most striking passage: "If a man has a mind to make a fool or a vagabond of himself, he can do it admirably in Paris, whereof I have seen many instances. If a man has a mind to amuse himself, there is no place like it on earth; diversions of every character, form, and degree, waiting for him at every step; let him taste them — then get into the diligence and ride away, or stay and go to the devil." London interested him scarcely more. He was seven or eight days there, and saw, of course, all the sights, going even up the river to Richmond in a steamboat. "St. Paul's, which the English ridiculously compare to St. Peter's, is without exception the dirtiest and gloomiest church I have been in yet. I went up to the ball at the top of the cupola, where the prospect is certainly a most wonderful one. I have been on mountains where nothing could be seen but unbroken forests, stretching in every direction to the horizon, and I enjoyed the sight; but to look down from St. Paul's and see tiled roofs and steeples, half hid in smoke and mist, a filthy river covered with craft running through the midst, and to hear the incessant hum and to smell the coal smoke that pollutes the air, —

all this is very curious and amusing for a while, but I would scarce trouble myself to look again. All was dirty and foul, the air was chilly and charged with fog and sleet, though it is the genial month of May. The smoke that you could see streaming in the wind from ten thousand earthen chimney-pots, mingled with the vapors and obscured the prospect like a veil. It was an indistinct, but limitless panorama. The taller church spires alone rose above the cloud into a comparatively clear atmosphere, and these could be seen faintly far off on the horizon, to show how far this wilderness of houses reached." He says nothing about Liverpool, to which he goes from London, but he is in his element when he gets north to Carlisle and Scotland. He admires Edinburgh, follows the steps of Sir Walter Scott, goes to Abbotsford, walks up to Arthur's Seat, fishes in the Tweed, and wants to fish in all the brooks that flow from the Cheviot Hills. He sees the blood of Rizzio at Holyrood Palace, inspects the regalia in the Castle, enjoys the view from the Calton Hill, and revels in the traditions of the town. Thence he goes to Glasgow and Liverpool again to take the vessel for America, which he reaches in June.

This was by no means his last visit abroad. In 1858 he went for his health; in 1869 he went for his health and to collect material for his histories. In 1872 he went again to collect material. In 1880 he went mainly for manuscripts. In 1881 he went for the same purpose. In 1887 he travelled for his health again. This time he made for Spain, sailing for Santander in company with his friend Dr. Algernon Coolidge; but a sudden attack of lameness seized him in Madrid and prevented his going farther; so he came at once home after an absence of a few weeks only.

On reviewing this first trip and gathering up my impressions, I am struck with these particulars: his love of pictures, as shown in his visit to different galleries, his indifference to music, of which he says no word, and his comparative indifference to architecture, which impresses him mainly by its vastness, and general grandeur of effect. But his appreciation of power, space, dignity, and of human greatness is universal. Crowds are always interesting to him. He tries to get at the heart of the common people, has no prejudices of a social kind, likes simplicity, honesty, steadfastness of purpose, ←

energy of mind. His respect for individuality is very strong, and he finds it mostly where the arts of civilized life have not come to prevail over the natural impulses of mankind. The infirmity for which he went abroad in 1844 was not, apparently, removed, but it left no impression beyond that of temporary inconvenience and disappointment, as preventing his visiting certain places that he wanted to see. He speaks of it once as "neuralgia," but what precisely he means by this is not evident. At all events, the disease made no permanent mark upon him.

On his return home, the special malady that sent him to Europe not being cured, but his general health being excellent, and his mind being not only enlarged, but stored with interesting memories by his journey, he immediately joined his class at Cambridge, took part in the exercises of Commencement Day, got his degree, and was chosen a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, which included, that year, twenty-one out of a class of sixty-two; the year before, there were nineteen in a class of seventy; the year before that there were nineteen in a class of fifty-six; in 1841 there were sixteen in a class of forty-six. After leaving college Mr. Parkman joined the Law School; but his stay there was comparatively short, and it was only in name that he took up legal pursuits. The study of abstract principles, the search after precedents, was not to his taste; the authority of prescription galled him. The truth is that his mind was in the wilderness. He was devoted to the reading of history, especially Indian history, his general study converging to that. He loved freedom, space, open air, exercise, and was even then probably meditating the trip to the Far West which proved so unfortunate. There was for him a charm in solitude. The Far West at that time was almost unknown; it was an immense desert, trodden by the feet of wandering savages, by an occasional hunter, or an adventurous pioneer. The whole region was unexplored by civilized man. Already preparations had been made for this journey. The experiences in the forests of Maine and Canada had made him familiar with every kind of woodcraft, which he later brought to perfection, and which was the foundation probably of his love for horticulture. He was used to watching the winds, to tracing the almost invisible trail of footsteps; he was intimate with trees of every kind, with the

effect of light and shade on masses of foliage. While he was at the Law School the manager of a circus troupe in Boston was giving lessons in horse-back riding. Parkman joined a class, chose the hardest horses, practised riding in every form, with or without a saddle or stirrups; could run, leap, jump on a charger at full speed, — in short, perform feats which only a "professional" could execute. He kept fire-arms in his room, was acquainted with the rifle practice, could tramp through the woods hours at a time, and in the spring of 1846 he set out on his journey.

"I remember," he says in the preface to "The Oregon Trail," "as we rode by the foot of Pike's Peak, when for a fortnight we met no face of man, my companion remarked, in a tone anything but complacent, that a time would come when those plains would be a grazing country, the buffalo give place to tame cattle, houses be scattered along the water courses, and wolves, bears, and Indians be numbered among the things that were. We consoled with each other on so melancholy a prospect, but with little thought what the future had in store. We knew that there was more or less gold in the seams of those untrodden mountains, but we did not foresee that it would build cities in the West, and plant hotels and gambling houses among the haunts of the grizzly bear. We knew that a few fanatical outcasts were groping their way across the plains to seek an asylum from Gentile persecution; but we did not imagine that the polygamous hordes of Mormons would rear a swarming Jerusalem in the bosom of solitude itself. We knew that more and more, year after year, the trains of emigrant wagons would creep in slow procession towards barbarous Oregon or wild and distant California; but we did not dream how Commerce and Gold would breed nations along the Pacific, the disenchanting screech of the locomotive break the spell of weird, mysterious mountains, woman's rights invade the fastnesses of the Arapahoes, and despairing savagery, assailed in front and rear, veil its scalp-locks and feathers before triumphant commonplace. We were no prophets to foresee all this; and, had we foreseen it, perhaps some perverse regret might have tempered the ardor of our rejoicing."

A brief summary of this expedition as bearing on his own health, is given in his autobiography. I must quote his own words, merely premising that he speaks of himself in the third person, as if he was describing somebody else:—

"A specific sign of mischief soon appeared in a weakness of sight, increasing with an ominous rapidity. Doubtless to study with the eyes

of another is practicable, yet the expedient is not an eligible one, and the writer bethought him of an alternative. It was essential to his plans to give an inside view of Indian life. This, then, was the time at once to accomplish the object and rest his failing vision. Accordingly he went to the Rocky Mountains, but he had reckoned without his host. A complication of severe disorders here seized him, and at one time nearly missed bringing both him and his schemes to an abrupt termination, but yielding to a system of starvation, at length assumed an intermittent and much less threatening form. A concurrence of circumstances left him but one means of accomplishing his purpose. This was to follow a large band of Ogillallah Indians, known to have crossed the Black Hill range a short time before. Reeling in the saddle with weakness and pain, he set forth, attended by a Canadian hunter. With much difficulty the trail was found, the Black Hills crossed, the reluctance of his follower overcome, and the Indians discovered on the fifth day encamped near the Medicine Bow range of the Rocky Mountains. On a journey of a hundred miles over a country in parts of the roughest, he had gained rather than lost in strength, while his horse was knocked up and his companion disconsolate with a painful cough. Joining the Indians, he followed their wanderings for several weeks. To have worn the airs of an invalid would certainly have been an indiscretion, since in that case a horse, a rifle, a pair of pistols, and a red shirt might have offered temptations too strong for aboriginal virtue. Yet to hunt buffalo on horseback, over a broken country, when, without the tonic of the chase, he could scarcely sit upright in the saddle, was not strictly necessary for maintaining the requisite prestige. The sport, however, was good, and the faith undoubting that, to tame the devil, it is best to take him by the horns."

An account of the expedition is given fully and in the minutest detail in the "Oregon Trail," which is the first book he wrote, published in 1847 and dictated at Brattleboro', Vt., to his companion, Quincy Adams Shaw, "the comrade of a summer and the friend of a lifetime." It was an effort of memory, assisted by rough notes only, and a singular illustration of the clearness and precision of his intellectual powers at that time. The story is one of hardship, exposure, fatigue, danger; but as I read the book over again recently, when preparing this memoir, I was struck with the enthusiasm that runs through all its pages, — the jubilant sense of freedom, the enchantment of the scenery, the rapture in the presence of forest and mountain, the joy of movement, the excitement of the chase, the general ecstasy of existence. It is hard to believe

that his infirmities began with this experience; they must have had a deeper root in his constitution. Undoubtedly they were hurried, increased, aggravated, intensified, by this trip to the West, but it seems impossible that they could have originated there, though from that moment all the worse symptoms appeared, and Mr. Parkman himself has referred to that period the chief disasters of his career.

It has already been said that Mr. Parkman's constitution was nervous, high-strung, and delicate. He himself tells us that, and describes his method of treatment, which was singularly unfortunate.

"Unconscious," he tells us, "of the character and origin [of the conditions of the nervous system], and ignorant that with time and confirmed health they would have disappeared, he had no other thought than that of crushing them by force, and accordingly applied himself to the work. Hence resulted a state of mental tension, habitual for several years and abundantly mischievous in its effects. With a mind overstrained and a body overtaxed, he was burning his candle at both ends." "As to the advantages of this method of dealing with that subtle personage [the devil], some question may have arisen in his mind when, returning after a few months to the settlement, he found himself in a condition but ill-adapted to support his theory. To the maladies of the prairie, succeeded a suite of exhausting disorders, so reducing him that circulation of the extremities ceased, the light of the sun became insupportable, and a wild whirl possessed his brain, joined to a universal turmoil of the nervous system which put his philosophy to the sharpest test it had hitherto known. All collapsed, in short, but the tenacious strength of muscles, hardened by long activity."

The process of "crushing out by force" his infirmities apparently succeeded at first, for a classmate of his assures me that in college he was sturdy and vigorous, and was regarded as an enviable man for health and strength. Even as late as 1848, his disability was regarded as merely temporary, though it afterward proved to be chronic.

"One year, four years, and numerous short intervals lasting from a day to a month, represent the literary interruptions since the work in hand was begun. Under the most favorable conditions, it was a slow and doubtful navigation, beset with reefs and breakers, demanding a constant lookout and a constant throwing of the lead. Of late years, however, the condition of the sight has so far improved as to permit reading,

not exceeding on the average five minutes at one time. This modicum of power, though apparently trifling, proves of the greatest service, since, by a cautious management, its application may be extended. By reading for one minute, and then resting for an equal time, this alternate process may only be continued for about half an hour. Then, after a sufficient interval, it may be repeated, often three or four times in the course of the day. By this means nearly the whole of the volume now offered has been composed. When the conditions were such as to render systematic application possible, a reader has been employed, usually a pupil of the public schools."

The story is infinitely touching, and is relieved only by the patient heroism with which the misery was borne. Such fortitude combined with so much sweetness, I, at least, never read of. That he could have written at all under the circumstances is simply amazing; that he could have written so much and so well, is one of the marvels of biography.

In May, 1850, he married Catherine Scollay, daughter of Jacob Bigelow, the famous Boston physician. Of this union, were three children: Grace (now Mrs. Charles P. Coffin), Francis (who died in infancy), and Catherine S. (now Mrs. J. T. Coolidge, Jr.). The marriage, so far as they were personally concerned, was perfectly happy. The two were devoted to each other, and the only clouds that gathered about them were "providential" and not of their own creating. The lameness of the husband was always a cross, and the death of the little boy was a fearful blow, the grief of which is supposed to have hastened the mother's death, in 1858. In the early part of this marriage, "The Conspiracy of Pontiac," perhaps the most fascinating of his books, was published, in 1851. This alone would prove the harmonious action of his faculties. But the "Oregon Trail," written in 1847, immediately after his travel through the West, is earlier evidence of this. The existence of such a book is a refutation, in my judgment, of the idea that this excursion had impaired the mental force of the man who wrote it. The strain must have been severe, but the conflict it provoked is abundantly atoned for by the display of intellectual energy which we should not have had without it; for the charm of Parkman's productions lies in the inordinate pressure of nervous vitality. They were forced out of him. He himself mentions gratefully the assistance he received from the gentler part of creation. During

the winter of 1851-52, he was confined to his room at Dr. Bigelow's in Summer Street by lameness. The following winter he was confined by the same cause in the house in Bowdoin Square. He could not walk, and wheeled himself about the room, taking his exercise on the piazza by splitting wood. Fortunately, the apartments in which he was confined were on the same floor, so that he did not have to go up or down stairs. In the spring of that year he went to Northampton to take advantage of the water cure. He had already been to Brattleboro', Vt., for the same purpose. During his marriage, he spent his winters at Dr. Bigelow's in part, and partly in Bowdoin Square; his summers he passed out of town,—one in Dorchester, near Milton; then in a hired cottage at Brookline; after that, at Jamaica Plain, where he bought a place on the edge of the pond, about 1851. It was during his married life that he wrote his only novel, "Vassall Morton." He did this for amusement, to expend his superfluous vitality, not being able to do more serious work. The book was not very cordially welcomed by the public, and he never regarded it with favor; was unwilling, in fact, to hear it spoken of. The reason for this is not evident, for the work was not one to be ashamed of. The incidents are spirited, the characters are interesting, the style is direct and vigorous,—not as glowing as in his historical books; not as picturesque and sunny; not as aromatic. There are no exquisite descriptions, like that of the Indian summer in "Pontiac," the woods in winter, the effect of morning and evening among the trees; but it is full of the characteristic qualities of the man, of courage, the love of adventure, the traits of perseverance, hardihood, and tenderness. The story ends with a significant passage. The hero and heroine meet after years of separation and disappointment. He says: "It is a brave heart that can hide a deep thought under a smile." She replies: "And a weak one that is always crouching among the shadows." He exclaims: "There is an abounding spirit of faith in you,—the essence which makes heroes, from Joan of Arc to Jennie Deans." She answers, "I know no one with faith like yours, which could hold to you through all your years of living burial." "Mine!" he cries; "it was wrenched to its uttermost roots. I thought the world was given over to the devil." She rejoins, "But that was only for the moment." It is evident, however, that

novel-writing was not Francis Parkman's strong point. "Vassall Morton" was wanting in color, elasticity, ease of movement, and combination. The characters were presented strongly, but there was lack of grouping, of illustration by means of side lights. It was too straightforward, too much on a line; above all, its purpose was too grave. M. Cousin, in his preface to "Jacqueline Pascal," says admirably: "Un homme sérieux n'écrit que par nécessité, et parceque autrement il ne peut atteindre son but." It is at least possible that when Parkman became immersed in his grand project he looked back with something like contempt on a work that simply occupied him in days when he could do nothing better.

It must not be supposed that Mr. Parkman did not attempt all the methods of cure. It has been said that he went twice to a water-cure establishment. He consulted the best physicians in Paris. He received all kinds of advice; he submitted to painful experiments. One doctor even thought he would never be better. An eminent specialist in nervous diseases watched him for three months, supposing that his disease must end in insanity, but he found none. His best physician, after all, was his garden on Jamaica Pond, where he lost himself in the cultivation of flowers. Into this art he threw all the ardor which afterwards appeared in his histories. Seven summers he spent, with the utmost nicety of experiment in hybridization, in the production of a certain kind of lily, called the *Lilium Parkmani*. In the cultivation of roses he was even distinguished. His "Book of Roses" appeared in 1866. The domain was small, only about three acres; he kept but one man; and all his compost was furnished by a horse, a cow, and a pig, with such leaves as he was able to rake together. But it was enough, and by mixing mind with his soil, as, according to the story, the eminent painter mixed brains with his pigments, Parkman produced roses and lilies that were famous. Still, the best product was his own enjoyment and health. The cultivation of flowers tempted him out of doors, gave him an interest, supplied his over-active intellect with exercise, besides feeding his love for beauty and fragrance. Flowers were a part of Nature, which was his delight, and his supreme excellence in their culture was perhaps due to the same passionate enthusiasm that his historical works display. For several years he was President of the Horticultural Society. He was also

for a short time Professor of Horticulture at the Bussey Institution, a department of Harvard University.

His horticultural labors, carried on in the open air, amid delightful surroundings, partially restored his health. When he was able he took long walks, rowed on the pond, or exercised on horseback. When he could no longer do this, it was his habit to take a drive every day in a carriage. In his literary work there was no sign of illness or weariness. Even in conversation there was no allusion to his ill-health, but always the most remarkable buoyancy. I have the testimony of an eminent physician to the effect that always when speaking of his health he showed the utmost common-sense and quietness. He was apprehensive, at one time, that his style might be affected by the condition of his disease, but it was, to the last, as fresh and vigorous as it ever had been, and betrayed no sign of weakness. Indeed, his restless activity did not flag even for an instant, but his extreme perseverance continued unwearied to the end. Not until his work was done did he find any rest; then his eyes grew better and he was comparatively at ease. Sainte-Beuve, in his paper on Taine's "English Literature," says: "All things considered, every allowance being made for general or particular elements and for circumstances, there still remain place and space enough around men of talent wherein they can move and turn themselves with entire freedom. And, moreover, were the circle drawn round each a very contracted one, every man of talent, every genius, in so far as he is in some degree a magician and an enchanter, possesses a secret entirely his own, whereby to perform prodigies within this circle and work wonders there." Francis Parkman is a brilliant illustration of the truth of these words.

His triumph over pain and physical disability is universally known, and justly celebrated as a signal example of the supremacy of mind over matter. But his triumph over nervous irritability was much more remarkable. Again and again he had to restrain the impulse to say vehement things, or to do violent deeds without the least provocation, but he maintained so absolutely his moral self-control that none but the closest observer would notice any deviation from the most perfect calm and serenity. The tremendous conflict between two unseen forces was unnoticeable by any ordinary vision. May it not be in consequence of this prodigious effort of will that

the portrait of the man was sometimes sardonic and almost stern? Several photographs of him were taken, some of them fairly good; the portrait in this volume is one of the best; but the sun cannot see qualities that do not appear on the surface; the consequence is that the interior man is not revealed. It must be confessed that the lineaments of Mr. Parkman lent themselves to some misapprehension. The strong underjaw, the firm mouth, the penetrating eye, the rather long nose, led to even caricature; but the portraits, as a rule, did not do him justice. His manner was direct and warm; his greeting cordial; while a gleam of humor was even fascinating. He was a favorite in society, much loved by his friends, of whom he had many, and was in great demand on all festive occasions. At the special meeting of the Historical Society held in his honor, Judge Lowell, a very old and intimate acquaintance, used these words: "In private life, Mr. Parkman was not only a most entertaining companion, but the truest of friends. He knew and remembered everything which affected or interested those with whom he was intimate. He knew their children and grandchildren, by name and by character. He knew their affections and all their history. I belonged to a little club of which he was a member, which used to meet every fortnight during the season. He was very fond of meeting with these few companions. After he had become unable, from infirmity, to climb the stairs, he came one evening, I remember, to my house in town. We all went down to the hall and had a most agreeable chat with him as long as he could stay, which was not very long." At the same meeting, the Hon. Leverett Saltonstall, his classmate, wrote: "Francis Parkman was a beloved member of the class of 1844. . . . He was selected by the class at the last Commencement to respond at the next Alumni dinner, according to custom, for the class which graduated fifty years ago, and, evidently gratified with this mark of his classmates' regard, he was looking forward with much satisfaction to performing his duty." He was full of original anecdote, his conversation was easy and flowing, and, he gave out his stores of memory without the least show of assumption, affectation, or superiority. I have met him at the annual festivals at Dr. G. E. Ellis's, when he could not even stand long on his crutches, but, as he sat in an easy-chair he entertained numbers of gentlemen, who always were eager to

get near him. His very presence seemed to give an air of assurance and cheerfulness to any company he was able to grace.

✓ A word or two must be said about his religious character, if we would have a full sketch of the man. He detested cant in every form, but especially in religion. All dogmatism in regard to spiritual things was his aversion. He felt that he knew nothing and that nobody else knew anything; consequently he held his peace. What his private opinions were, or whether he had any, his intimate friends could not tell. He probably was not so much a disbeliever as a non-believer, one who made no positive conclusions. The Abbé Casgrain, of Quebec, says, echoing a sentiment that has been expressed elsewhere: — ←

“ Let us say without circumlocution, regarding principles alone, the work of Mr. Parkman is a denial of all religious credence. The author rejects as well the Protestant idea as the Catholic dogma. He is really a rationalist. He admits no other principle than that vague theory which they call modern civilization. . . . The work of Mr. Parkman is a Procrustes' bed, in which he reduces everything to his own size. Rejecting the supernatural, he loses himself in conjectures, supposing a thousand human motives as explanation of the acts of heroism which faith and Apostolic zeal inspired in our ancestors.”

And yet this same man quotes as follows from the “ Jesuits in North America ”: —

“ On the seventeenth of May, 1642, Maisonneuve's little flotilla — a pinnace, a flat-bottomed craft moved by sails, and two row-boats — approached Montreal, and all on board raised in unison a hymn of praise. Montmagny was with them to deliver the island, in behalf of the Company of the Hundred Associates, to Maisonneuve, representative of the associates of Montreal. And here too, was Father Vimont, Superior of the missions, for the Jesuits had been prudently invited to accept the spiritual charge of the young colony. On the following day they glided along the green and solitary shores now thronged with the life of a busy city, and landed on the spot where Champlain, thirty-one years before, had chosen the fit site of a settlement. It was a tongue or triangle of land, formed by the junction of a rivulet with the St. Lawrence, and known afterwards as Point Callière. The rivulet was bordered by a meadow, and beyond rose the forest with its vanguard of scattered trees. Early spring flowers were blooming in the young grass, and birds of varied plumage flitted among the boughs.

"Maisonneuve sprang ashore, and fell on his knees. His followers imitated his example; and all joined their voices in enthusiastic songs of thanksgiving. Tents, baggage, arms, and stores were landed. An altar was raised on a pleasant spot near at hand; and Mademoiselle Mauce, with Madame de la Peltrie, aided by her servant Charlotte Barré, decorated it with a taste which was the admiration of the beholders. Now all the company gathered before the shrine. Here stood Vimont in the rich vestment of his office. Here were the two ladies, with their servant; Montmagny, no very willing spectator; and Maisonneuve, a warlike figure, erect and tall, his men clustering around him, — soldiers, sailors, artisans, and laborers, — all alike soldiers at need. They kneeled in reverent silence as the Host was raised aloft; and when the rite was over, the priest turned and addressed them: 'You are a grain of mustard seed that shall rise and grow till its branches overshadow the earth. You are few, but your work is the work of God. His smile is on you, and your children shall fill the land.' The afternoon waned; the sun sank behind the western forest, and twilight came on. Fireflies were twinkling over the darkened meadow. They caught them, tied them with threads into shining festoons, and hung them before the altar, where the Host remained exposed. Then they pitched their tents, lighted their bivouac fires, stationed their guards, and lay down to rest. Such was the birth-night of Montreal."

And this: —

"Meanwhile from Old France to New came succors and reinforcements to the missions of the forest. More Jesuits crossed the sea to urge on the work of conversion. These were no stern exiles, seeking on barbarous shores an asylum for a persecuted faith. Rank, wealth, power, and royalty itself, smiled on their enterprise, and bade them God-speed. Yet, withal, a fervor more intense, a self-abnegation more complete, a self-devotion more constant and enduring, will scarcely find its record on the page of human history."

And this: —

"But when we see them in the gloomy February of 1637, and the gloomier months that followed, toiling on foot from one town to another, wading through the sodden snow, under the bare and drifting forests, drenched with incessant rains, till they descried at length through the storm the clustered dwellings of some barbarous hamlet; when we see them entering, one after another, these wretched abodes of misery and darkness, and all for one sole end, the baptism of the sick and dying, — we may smile at the futility of the object, but we must needs admire the self-sacrificing zeal with which it was pursued."

Examples might be multiplied, but I will take only one more from the same volume:—

“The companions of Druilletes were all converts, who looked on him as a friend and a father. There were prayers, confessions, masses, and invocations of St. Joseph. They built their bark chapel at every camp, and no festival of the church passed unobserved. On Good Friday they laid their best robe of beaver-skin on the snow, placed on it a crucifix, and knelt around it in prayer. What was that prayer? It was a petition for the forgiveness and the conversion of their enemies, the Iroquois. Those who know the intensity and tenacity of an Indian's hatred will see in this something more than a change from one superstition to another. An idea had been presented to the mind of the savage, to which he had previously been an utter stranger. This is the most remarkable record of success in the whole body of the Jesuit ‘Relations’; but it is very far from being the only evidence that, in teaching the dogmas and observances of the Roman Church, the missionaries taught the morals of Christianity. When we look for the results of these missions, we soon become aware that the influence of the French and the Jesuits extended far beyond the circle of converts. It eventually modified and softened the manners of many unconverted tribes. In the wars of the next century we do not often find those examples of diabolic atrocity with which the earlier annals were crowded. The savage burned his enemies alive, it is true, but he rarely ate them; neither did he torment them with the same deliberation and persistency. He was a savage still, but not so often a devil. The improvement was not great, but it was distinct; and it seems to have taken place wherever Indian tribes were in close relations with any respectable community of white men. Thus Philip's war in New England, cruel as it was, was less ferocious, judging from Canadian experience, than it would have been if a generation of civilized intercourse had not worn down the sharpest asperities of barbarism. Yet it was to French priests and colonists, mingled as they were soon to be among the tribes of the vast interior, that the change is chiefly to be ascribed. In this softening of manners, such as it was, and in the obedient Catholicity of a few hundred tamed savages, gathered at stationary missions in various parts of Canada, we find, after a century had elapsed, all the results of the heroic toil of the Jesuits. The missions had failed because the Indians had ceased to exist. Of the great tribes on whom rested the hopes of the early Canadian fathers, nearly all were virtually extinct. The missionaries built laboriously and well, but they were doomed to build on a failing foundation. The Indians melted away, not because civilization destroyed them, but because their own ferocity and intractable indolence made it impossible that they should exist in its presence. <—

Either the plastic energies of a higher race or the servile pliancy of a lower one would, each in its way, have preserved them; as it was, their extinction was a foregone conclusion. As for the religion which the Jesuits taught them, however Protestants may carp at it, it was the only form of Christianity likely to take root in their crude and barbarous nature."

Is it possible that the man who could write thus was destitute of a sense of the value of religious faith? His appreciation of nobleness is always quick and constant, and he never fails to do perfect justice to all the victories of conscience. Witness, too, his earnest search after truth, as shown in his entering the convent of the Passionists in Rome, and his living among the Indians in the West. Even M. Alexander Delouche, in a criticism on the "Pioneers," writes: "Anglo-Saxon and Protestant as he is, we must not ask of Mr. Parkman definite judgments on us; nevertheless, if the love of his race and the ardors of his belief sometimes make him blind, his loyalty is superior to his prejudices. . . . He abounds in facts which no one can read with a dry eye; on the other hand he renders to us the most precious testimony."

His largeness of view was also very extraordinary. At Catania, in Sicily, the youth was very much struck by the church of the Benedictines, and says: "They are mistaken who sneer at its ceremonies as a mere mechanical force; they have a powerful and salutary effect on the mind. Those who have witnessed the services in this Benedictine church and deny what I say, must either be peculiarly stupid, or insensible by nature, or rendered so by prejudice." That he was an Agnostic must be conceded, but his Agnosticism was not that of indifference or insensibility. He simply would not profess what he did not comprehend. He claimed for himself no special revelations of truth. He was not a seer, but felt very much as the Old Testament poet did, who cried, "Who can by searching find out God?" He did by his own faculties all that he could do to advance the interests of mankind, and more than that can hardly be asked. Perhaps Hooker's famous sentence best explains his position: "It is dangerous for the feeble brain of man to wade far into the doings of the Most High, whom although to know be life, and joy to make mention of His Name, yet our minutest knowledge is to know

that we know Him not as indeed He is, neither can know Him, and that our safest eloquence concerning Him is our silence, whereby we confess, without confession, that His glory is inexplicable, His greatness beyond our capacity and reach." He never went to church, partly because he could not; but even if he could, a deep, thoughtful man like him would hardly be fed, while for ecclesiastical and sentimental religion he had no special liking. The truth is he was an historian, not a poet, not a theologian, not a mystic. Of Christianity as a power in the world he has spoken with the greatest respect. He never failed to take the best view of the Church, and the power of the spiritual life was never denied by him. This historical attitude, coupled with his manifest unfitness for abstract research, and the physical disability that compelled him to follow his own line of investigation, was quite sufficient to keep his mind from religious speculation.

Still, M. Casgrain may be substantially correct, — substantially, not literally; for unless "civilization" be understood in its best sense, as implying the exercise of the highest rational powers, the statement is misleading. Mr. Parkman belonged rather to the ethical than to the spiritual order of men, — those who are so admirably described by Rev. James Martineau in his discourse on the "Christian Doctrine of Merit." "Till somebody has a conscience, nobody can feel a law. Accordingly, we everywhere meet with a higher order of men, who not only comprehend the wishes, but respect the rights, of others; who are ruled, not by expectation without, but by the sense of obligation within; who do, not the agreeable, but the just; and even amid the storm of public rage, can stand fast, with rooted foot and airy brow, like the granite mountain in the sea. Noble, however, as this foundation of uprightness always is, there may arise from it a self-estimate too proud and firm. If the stern consciousness of personal worth have no kindling of diviner aspiration, it will give the lofty sense of personal merit that makes the stoic and misses the saint. We do nothing well till we know our worth; nothing best till we forget it." One could hardly expect Parkman to resign his will, the supreme attribute of his being; and if sainthood demands that, he must be excluded from the class of saints; for he had more will than Saint Ignatius, Saint Charles, or Saint Francis. But that he had no regard for the Supreme Will, no one may

venture to affirm. The hero, in his case, barely missed the saint.

His political views are more easily explained, and well exhibit the unenthusiastic cast of his mind. He was not a thorough-going American, as that phrase is commonly understood; not a "Democrat" in the usual sense of the word,—not a believer, that is, in the raw material of human nature; certainly not a favorer of monarchy or oligarchy, or aristocracy as founded on rank, wealth, position, power, or any temporal condition whatever. His faith was in cultivated humanity; in man as he ought to be and might be; not in men or institutions as they were. I cannot forbear quoting here some passages from an article of his on "The Failure of Universal Suffrage," in the "North American Review" for July-August, 1878.

"If a politician would let him alone, Demos would be the exact embodiment of the average intelligence and worth of a great people; but deluded and perverted as he is, he falls below this mark and passes for worse than his real self. . . . He is a type of collective folly as well as wisdom, collective ignorance as well as knowledge, and collective frailty as well as strength. In short, he is utterly mortal, and must rise or fall as he is faithful or false to the great laws that regulate the destinies of man. . . . A single human mind may engender thoughts which the combined efforts of millions of lower intelligences cannot conceive. . . . Shall we look for ideal society in that which tends to a barren average and a weary uniformity, treats men like cattle, counts them by the head, and gives them a vote apiece, without asking whether or not they have the sense to use it; or in that which recognizes the inherent differences between man and man, gives the preponderance of power to character and intelligence, yet removes artificial barriers, keeps circulation free through all its parts, and rewards merit wherever it appears, with added influence? This, of course, is a mere idea, never to be fully realized; but it makes vast difference at what a republic aims, and whether it builds on numbers or on worth. The methods by which it tries to reach its mark may be more or less effective, but it is all-important that the mark should be a true one. What the times need are convictions and the courage to enforce them. The hope lies in an organized and determined effort to rouse the better half of the people to a sense that honest and trained capacity in our public service is essential to our well-being, and that the present odious and contemptible system is kept up in the interests of the few and not of the whole. . . . There are those that call on imperialism to help us;

but, supposing this heroic cure to be possible, we should rue the day that brought us to it. Our emperor would be nothing but a demagogue on a throne, forced to conciliate the masses by giving efficacy to their worst desires. . . . A nation is judged by its best product. To stand in the foremost rank, it must give to the human race great types of mankind, and add new thought to the treasury of the world. No extent of territory, no growth of population, no material prosperity, no average of intelligence will ever be accepted as substitutes. They may excite fear, wonder, or even a kind of admiration, but they will never win nor deserve the highest place."

This is a high ideal, and Mr. Parkman labored with all his might to make it real. His friends were among the most honest, brave, and independent of our citizens. The paper that he read most was devoted to the truest advancement of the country. There were three concerns that he always had at heart, — the Nation, the Schools, and the Libraries. He was bitterly disappointed that he could not go to the war, — partly, perhaps, because he loved the life of adventure, exposure, hardship, and danger; but partly, too, because he had a very strong belief in the triumph of republican principles. He took the greatest interest in the young men of his acquaintance who were able to go, and loved to encourage their highest anticipations. That there was a martial strain in his composition might be inferred from his writings, but he has freely avowed it. Thus, in the "Jesuits," speaking of Maisonneuve, he says: "The religion which animated him had not destroyed the soldierly pride which takes root so readily and so strongly in a manly nature." He wrote earnestly about our common schools, making time for that out of the few moments that were allowed him for his historical researches. For thirteen years he was one of the Corporation of Harvard College, and for six years he was one of the Overseers, — thus keeping up the tradition of the family which founded two professorships at Cambridge. His connection with the Historical Society dates far back. He became a member in 1852; at the annual meeting of the society held in April, 1885, he was chosen Vice-President. He gave to the library, which was in a fire-proof building, a hundred and twenty-six volumes of manuscript, only twenty-four of which were unbound, together with miscellaneous papers, note-books, etc.

He had small faith in sentimental philanthropists or reform-

ers. His opposition to woman suffrage was vehement and often expressed, being a matter of intense feeling on his part, and grounded as well in principle as in expediency. His reading of history had taught him to distrust feminine influence in government, and his philosophy told him to distrust feminine qualities in administrative affairs. In a pamphlet which he wrote and which was published at the request of an association of women, he says:—

“The suffragists’ idea of government is not practical, but utterly unpractical. It is not American, but French. It is that government of abstractions and generalities which found its realization in the French Revolution and its apostle in Jean Jacques Rousseau. The French had an excuse for their frenzy in the crushing oppression they had just flung off and in their inexperience of freedom. We have no excuse. Since the nation began we have been free, and our liberty is in danger from nothing but its own excesses. Since France learned to subject the ideas of Rousseau to the principles of stable freedom, embodied in the parliamentary government of England and in our own republicanism, she has emerged from alternate tumult and despotism to enter the paths of hope and progress. . . . Progress, to be genuine, must be in accord with natural law. If it is not, it ends in failure and in retrogression. To give women a thorough and wholesome training both of body and mind; to prepare such of them as have strength and opportunity, for various occupations different from what they usually exercise, and above all for the practice of medicine, in which we believe that they may render valuable service; to rear them in more serious views of life and its responsibilities, — are all in the way of normal and healthy development. But to plunge them into politics, where they are not needed and for which they are unfit, would be scarcely more a movement of progress than to force them to bear arms and fight. . . . In the politics of the future, the predominant, if not the engrossing, questions will be to all appearance those of finance and the relations of labor and capital. From the nature of their occupations, as well as other causes, women in general are ignorant of these matters, and not well fit to deal with them. They require an experience, a careful attention, a deliberation and coolness of judgment, and a freedom from passion, so rare that at the best their political treatment is full of difficulty and danger. If these qualities are rare in men, they are still more so in women, and feminine instinct will not in the present case supply their place. . . . In the full and normal developments of womanhood lie the best interests of the world. Let us labor earnestly for them; and, that we may not labor in vain, let us save women from the barren perturbations of American politics.”

From these extracts it will be seen that he was eminently rationalistic in his treatment of great social questions, that his reliance was on experience; and while "general principles" had but little charm for him, there was plenty of shrewd common-sense, practical wisdom, and that faculty which we know as judgment. The idealists of either the philosophic or the enthusiastic school could not claim him. There was a vein of conservatism in him which he himself acknowledged, and which he attributed to his father. But his father did not grow reactionary as he grew older, while the son, besides sharing the push of a later generation, had distinct anticipations of improvement in present conditions. He was by no means a man who worshipped the past, but he felt obliged to consult it. He saw the shadows on the landscape, the ballast in the ship. He was a critic, noting the things that are, as well as the things that may be, and measuring literal facts, leaving to others the ecstasy of following glowing imaginations. In other words, his method was that of an historian, not that of a poet. But there was no exalted aspiration of man to which he did not heartily respond. If he could not respond, it was because he did not feel that it was exalted. ←

With the Puritan spirit — the spirit of dogmatism and exclusiveness — he had no sympathy; and, while he admired its moral quality, as illustrated by its leaders, he abhorred its intellectual harshness. Mr. Parkman dreaded the influence of French-Canadian Catholics. In his judgment, they were trying to subvert the New England ideas, to substitute the French language for English, to overthrow our system of common schools, and, in a word, to transfer their civilization to our native soil.

The problems involved in the treatment of the modern Indian did not interest him supremely. The experiments at Hampton and Carlisle did not awaken his enthusiasm. "The Indian of to-day, armed with a revolver and crowned with an old hat, cased, possibly, in trousers or muffled in a tawdry shirt, is an Indian still, but an Indian shorn of the picturesqueness which was his most conspicuous merit." The *primitive* savage, with his paint and feathers and hunting equipments, did not command his entire respect. "The Oregon Trail" is full of stories of his rapacity, ferocity, cruelty, cowardice, superstition, cunning, love of gambling, and greediness. (See pages 222, 227-229, 231-234, 236, 238, 258, 261, 267, 281.)

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"The Indian," he says, "never launches into speculation and conjecture; his reason moves in its beaten track. His soul is dormant; and no exertions of the missionaries, Jesuit or Puritan, of the Old World or of the New, have as yet availed to arouse it." "In the primitive Indian's conception of a God, the idea of moral good has no part. His deity does not dispense justice for this world or the next, but he leaves mankind under the power of a subordinate spirit who controlled the universe." "The primitive Indian believed in the immortality of the soul, but he did not always believe in a state of future reward and punishment. Nor, when such a belief existed, was the good to be rewarded a moral good, or the evil to be punished a moral evil. Skilful hunters, brave warriors, men of influence and consideration, went, after death, to the happy hunting-ground; while the slothful, the cowardly, and the weak were doomed to eat serpents and ashes in dreary regions of mist and darkness." "The first point with the priests was of course to bring the object of their zeal to an acceptance of the fundamental doctrines of the Roman Church; but as the mind of the savage was by no means that beautiful blank which some have represented it, there was much to be erased as well as to be written. They must renounce a host of superstitions, to which they were attached with a strong tenacity, or which may rather be said to have been engrained in their very natures." ("The Jesuits," p. 134.) "It was the inert mass of pride, sensuality, indolence, and superstition that opposed the march of the Faith, and in which the Devil lay entrenched as behind impregnable bulwarks." "It was a strange and miserable spectacle to behold the savages of this continent, at the time when the knell of their own common ruin had already sounded. Civilization had gained a foothold on their borders. The long and gloomy reign of barbarism was drawing near its close, and their united efforts could scarcely have availed to sustain it. Yet, in this crisis of their destiny, these doomed tribes were tearing each other's throats in selfish fury, joined to an intelligence that served little purpose but mutual destruction." "To sum up the results of this examination, the primitive Indian was a savage in his religion as in his life. His gods were no whit better than himself. Even when he borrows from Christianity the idea of a Supreme and Universal Spirit, his tendency is to reduce him to a local habitation and a bodily shape; and this tendency disappears only in tribes that have been long in contact with civilized white men. The primitive Indian, yielding his untutored homage to One All Pervading and Omnipotent Spirit, is a dream of poets, rhetoricians, and sentimentalists." "The very traits that raise him above the servile races are hostile to the kind and degree of civilization which those races so easily attain. His intractable spirit of independence and the pride which forbids him to be an imitator, reinforces but too strongly that savage lethargy of mind

from which it is so hard to rouse him. No race, perhaps, ever offered greater difficulties to those laboring for its improvement." ("Jesuits," 21st edition, 1885, p. lxxxix of Introduction.) "For the most part, a civilized white man can discover very few points of sympathy between his own nature and that of an Indian. With every disposition to do justice to their qualities, he must be conscious that an impassable gulf lies between him and his red brethren. Nay, so alien to himself do they appear that, after breathing the air of the prairie for a few months or weeks, he begins to look upon them as a troublesome and dangerous species of wild beast." ("The Oregon Trail," 8th edition, revised, 1885, p. 287.)

Mr. Parkman was unquestionably aware that these sentiments would not be welcome to friends of the Indians; but they were his, and they were expressed, not from prejudice, but in all sincerity. No one would have been more pleased than he to find his interpretation unjustified by experience; for he demanded that the savage should be fairly understood and honorably treated. With sentimentalism of every kind he had no patience, but if the Indian could be civilized, could be made an industrious farmer, a law-abiding citizen, a faithful scout, a disciplined soldier, he would gladly have confessed himself in error. They who find fault with his opinions should not forget that his physical condition forbade his visiting Hampton or Carlisle, attending public meetings, conversing with General Armstrong, the founder of Hampton, or with Captain Pratt, the Superintendent of Carlisle; and that owing to the suffering in his head he was often debarred from conversation on subjects that interested him. He always supposed that he had a candid appreciation of the Indian nature, but he was ever ready to revise it if opportunity offered; for he was one of those absolutely truthful men who could neither be bribed, deceived, nor brow-beaten.

But it is as an historian that Parkman will be always remembered. Here he was famous, and deservedly so. At a meeting in Sanders Theatre at Cambridge, on December 6, 1893, Mr. Justin Winsor and Mr. John Fiske, eminent authorities on historical subjects, paid glowing tributes to his fidelity, accuracy, thoroughness of treatment, freedom from prejudice, and picturesqueness of style.

At that meeting, which was presided over by President Eliot, of Harvard University, Mr. Winsor is reported to have

said: "Francis Parkman believed that the real record of events, and not a paraphrase, was a true one. Honesty of citation was the greatest thing that Parkman stood for. He made the course of events carry its own philosophy. He stood for the integrity of his art. His love for art did not swerve him from his life-long purpose. He represented the picturesque element in history, but we are apt to forget the consummate research that he always used. He was a scholar, but he was also an artist, and he never forgot proportion." Mr. John Fiske, himself the master of a graphic pen, spoke of the "wonderful picturesqueness in Parkman's writings. His eyes saw nothing dull or commonplace. He pictured the West, with all its wildness and barbarity, with wonderful vividness, even to the details of scenes and characters. He has made for his men a place in literature. | Parkman is the most American of all our historians, because he deals with purely American history; but at the same time he is a historian for all mankind, and all time, one of the greatest that ever lived." This was high praise from such men, for they spoke of things they knew; they spoke as experts, and not as those who uttered what a feeling of mere pleasure dictated. Theirs were calm and meditated words.

Parkman's range was necessarily somewhat extended. It seemed narrow because he fixed his reader's attention on the point to which several long lines converged. That he was a critical student like the English Freeman or the French Martin is not claimed. He was not an expert in American history, like Bancroft; or in Colonial history, like Savage, Deane, or Winthrop; but he was familiar with everything that belonged to his subject. The roots of this went deep and struck out far, and he followed each sucker to the end. His account of Acadia is as complete and at the same time as minute as anybody could desire. Causes were traced as carefully as incidents. He had great respect for the truths of history, and, therefore, small patience with the romance that clouded it. The poet was admirable in his place, he thought, but his place was not among the chroniclers. It should be added that he had read history ever since his youth; his hunger for facts was insatiable; while an exceedingly tenacious memory held vast stores of information ready for use as argument or illustration. Thus it is impossible to say exactly how wide his circuit was.

That it reached to the confines of his themes is evident; that it reached beyond them is quite probable, in fact is almost certain in view of his swift intelligence and all-devouring curiosity. The task of measuring the scope of Mr. Parkman's historical acquirements is rendered more difficult by the extreme reticence of the man. The compulsion that the condition of his nervous system laid him under to repress his private feelings extended itself to his whole mind, forcing him to keep to himself his deepest thoughts, and to say nothing about matters that interested him. He was one of the few men of whom it is safe to say that he hid more than he revealed. There were depths in him which never were sounded. ←

✓ As Mr. Parkman's histories were composed from original documents, no ultimate reliance being placed on secondary sources, the accumulation of manuscripts was naturally larger than his collection of volumes even in his own department. He was never a book fancier or gatherer; he had not a large library, — no divinity; no philosophy; no science; no general literature, to speak of. The Greek and Roman Classics came from his father. So did the volumes of theology, and most of those of a miscellaneous character. Many books and pamphlets were sent by their authors. The bulk of his library was historical. Little of this was rare or costly. The works of travel or biography, the treatises on the Indians, and such like were not hard to obtain. The library of Harvard University has about twenty-five hundred volumes of his, almost all he had, either of his own or his father's. There were, of course, heaps of notes on roses, lilies, as well as on characters and events, but these are not commonly reckoned among the contents of a library. ✓

Little difficulty was found in gaining access to foreign archives. The elder Margry, Superintendent of the Archives des Marines, in Paris, was his warm friend; and his son, who succeeded him, could not have thrown serious obstacles in his way, for Parkman was instrumental among others, under the leadership of Mr. Washburne and General Garfield, in obtaining a grant of \$10,000 from Congress for the publication, in six volumes, of the very documents he himself had got copied at great expense some time before. Naturally their relations were friendly. His manuscripts went to the Historical Society, as has been said; the books, including several maps, to Har-

ward, where they will be most useful to students in his field. That Mr. Parkman investigated everything connected with his subject cannot be questioned. In truth, he was exceedingly particular about his details. As one illustration of this it may be mentioned that, before writing a certain description which required the effect of moonlight he applied to a distinguished astronomer to know the exact position of the moon at that time. He was faithful in the smallest matters as well as in the greatest, though he made no display of information. He indeed made his own subject, and exhausted it. George W. Curtis, in reviewing "The Discovery of the Great West," speaks thus :—

"This is a subject which Mr. Parkman has made as much his own as Motley the Dutch Republic, or Macaulay the English Revolution. He is a thorough master of his material, which is much scattered and exists largely in manuscript; and his imagination, his picturesque narrative style, and his admirable perception of the true point of interest give to his historical works a wonderful charm and symmetry. It is to the pages of Mr. Parkman that we must go for the American Indian. Cooper so bewitches our young fancy with Uncas and the red heroes that it is very difficult to divest our estimate of the Indian of a false and foolish glamour."

In the Preface to "Montcalm and Wolfe," Mr. Parkman says :—

"A very large amount of unpublished material has been used in its preparation, consisting for the most part of documents copied from the Archives and Libraries of France and England, especially from the Archives de la Marine et des Colonies, the Archives de la Guerre, and the Archives Nationales at Paris, and the Public Record Office and the British Museum at London. The papers copied for the present work in France alone exceeded six thousand folio pages of manuscript, additional and supplementary to the 'Paris Documents' procured for the State of New York under the agency of Mr. Brodhead. The copies made in England form ten volumes, besides many English documents consulted in the original manuscript. Great numbers of autograph letters, diaries, and other writings of persons engaged in the war have also been examined on this side of the Atlantic."

In the preface to "Frontenac," he writes :—

"The authorities on which the book rests are drawn chiefly from the manuscript collections of the French government in the Archives Nationales, the Bibliothèque Nationale, and, above all, the vast repository

ries of the Archives of the Marine and Colonies. Others are from Canadian and American sources. I have, besides, availed myself of the collection of French, English, and Dutch documents published by the State of New York, under the excellent editorship of Dr. O'Callaghan, and of the manuscript collections made in France by the governments of Canada and of Massachusetts. A considerable number of books, contemporary or nearly so with the events described, also help to throw light upon them; and these have all been examined. The citations in the margins represent but a small part of the authorities consulted. 'This mass of material has been studied with extreme care, and peculiar pains have been taken to secure accuracy of statement.' "In the preface of 'The Old Régime,' I wrote: 'Some of the results here reached are of a character which I regret, since they cannot be agreeable to persons for whom I have a very cordial regard. The conclusions drawn from the facts may be matter of opinion; but it will be remembered that the facts themselves can be overthrown only by overthrowing the evidence on which they rest, or bringing forward counter-evidence of equal or greater strength; and neither task will be found an easy one.'"

When we consider his natural repugnance to investigations of this kind, the fact that the documents were written in old French, which is hard enough to read even in short passages, and the enormous mass of manuscript which he had to wade through, the labor must have been not only frightful in amount but most irksome. He was dependent almost entirely upon the fidelity of others, for he could keep no regular amanuensis, owing to his inability to work steadily. He could employ a reader for special purposes and short periods only, though abroad he was able to use the services of trained copyists, while at home he was blessed in having the help of his own household when he needed it.

Thus his method was entirely his own. The manuscripts were read over to him slowly, one by one. First the chief points were considered, then the details of the story were gone over carefully and minutely. As the reading went on, he made notes, first of essential matters, then of non-essential. After this he welded everything together, made the narrative completely his own, infused into it his own fire, quickened it by his own imagination, and made it as it were a living experience, so that his books read like personal reminiscences. It was certainly a slow and painful process, but the result more than justified the labor. These materials, it has been said,

were given to the Massachusetts Historical Society, and deposited in a handsome cabinet made by the order of the author himself. The books came out as follows: "The Oregon Trail" (first called "California and Oregon Trail") was originally published in 1847; "The Conspiracy of Pontiac" appeared in 1851; "The Pioneers of France in the New World" in 1865; "The Jesuits in North America" in 1867; "La Salle" (first called "Discovery of the Great West") in 1869; "The Old Régime" in 1874; "Frontenac" in 1877; "Montcalm and Wolfe" in 1884; "The Half-Century of Conflict," the close of the series, in 1892. Each work was designed to be a unit in itself, independent of the rest; but the whole, taken as a series, form a connected history of France in the New World. Writing in 1866 to his friend, Mr. Martin Brimmer, Mr. Parkman says: "Taking the last forty years as a whole, the capacity of literary work which during that time has fallen to my share has, I am confident, been considerably less than a fourth part of what it would have been under normal conditions." Certainly the work done more than justifies the author, and is truly wonderful as performed under such circumstances. Most of his books were written from dictation. For many years, he used his "gridiron," as he used to call it, his wire frame-work; but as his eyes got better, he gave it up, and could write a rough copy in pencil on yellow paper without looking steadily on it, and from this he dictated. Thus it will be seen that his "help to read" was merely an incident in his literary achievement.

It is quite true that each book might stand by itself as a distinct story, but the whole narrative is so attractive that one section of it is not enough. The reader is led on by an irresistible fascination through the various episodes until the end is reached. First came the close study of the American Indian, his mode of life, his manners, his character, his plottings and fightings, his grandeurs and his meannesses; then, as his plan was enlarged, the wonderful history is told in the "Pioneers of France in the New World" of the attempt to build up the Gallic power in the wilderness of Canada; the heroic labors of the Jesuits were next recited with singular candor and glow; this relation was succeeded by a description of the effort to explore the vast regions of the Mississippi River and the Lakes. The grand figures of La Salle, Mar-

quette, Joliet, Hennepin were presented, along with their discoveries. "The Old Régime in Canada" tells of the early condition of the territory, from 1653 to 1680, brilliantly pictures life in the wilds at that time, and throws a great deal of new light on future events. It is most important to one who would understand the actual state of the Dominion. A volume was devoted to Count Frontenac, his character and his exertions to establish the colony. Then came the struggle between Wolfe and Montcalm, which overthrew the French supremacy. The two men were livingly portrayed, and there were thrilling scenes all along. Here the unhappy tale of Acadia is closed. Washington comes in, Braddock, Pitt, Frederick of Prussia; portraits of many other actors in the great drama of conquest, wrought in the cabinet or on the field of battle, are painted at length. This was the end; the other book, "A Half-Century of Conflict," simply filled the space between "Frontenac" and "Montcalm and Wolfe," being number VI. of the series, from 1700 to 1748. Here we have Lovewell's Fight, the siege of Louisbourg, the founding of Detroit, the massacre at Deerfield, the search for the Pacific Ocean. There is more of Acadia, and a special chapter on Shirley's relation to it is printed in an appendix, containing original letters. Perhaps no volumes in the series are so remarkable as showing the carefulness of research displayed in the preparation. On reading them one is more than ever impressed by the unwearied pains that the writer must have taken. No scrap of paper escaped his eye that could throw light on his subject. He even goes back to Louis XIV. and the War of the Spanish Succession. That "gorgeous monarch," as he calls him, chose to "obey his own vanity and arrogance,"—a course which involved "crushing taxation, misery, and ruin, till France burst out at last in a frenzy, drunk with the wild dreams of Rousseau."

Our historians have, for the most part, chosen romantic themes for their narratives. Irving had Washington, Columbus, and, in the distance, the palace of the Alhambra. Prescott had Spain, Granada, Mexico, and Peru. Motley had the fascinating tale of the Dutch Republic, its towering figures, its exciting drama.

"As year by year his tapestry unrolled,
What varied wealth its growing length displayed!
What long processions framed in cloth of gold,
What stately forms their flowing robes arrayed!"

Parkman had the American wilderness. "For here, as it seemed to me, the forest drama was more stirring and the forest stage more thronged with appropriate actors than in any other passage of our history. It was not till some years later that I enlarged the plan to include the whole course of the American conflict between France and England, or, in other words, the history of the American forest, for this was the light in which I regarded it. My theme fascinated me, and I was haunted with wilderness images day and night." The subject was anything but barren or narrow. Here were the primeval woods with their depth of mould, where decaying trees had for generations accumulated their dust. Here were the silent, irresistible processes of nature. Here was the broad expanse of sky, the boundless horizon, the unlimited prairie, the whispering breeze through the foliage. Here were the mysterious sounds and silences, the voices of animals in the woods, the trails of the savage. "Mr. Parkman," says the Abbé Casgrain, "belongs to the romantic school. History as he conceives it, is not a dry skeleton, which one drags from the tomb; it is a vanished shadow which must be reanimated, clothed with flesh and muscle, filled with red blood, and made to palpitate with an immortal breath." "The rays of Mr. Parkman's style against the blue sky of our history resemble the splendors of the Aurora Borealis, and produce upon the mind the same sort of fascination." His books are full of descriptions. Indeed, as Mr. Winsor has intimated, the beauty of his pages, has obscured somewhat the groundwork of truth on which, the narrative rests. His volumes have all the enchantment of words of fiction. An excellent example of this was furnished me the other day by a gentleman whose two children, a little boy and a little girl, listened, before they went to bed, to a chapter that was read them by their mother. They had engaged with each other that neither should be absent when the reading went on. The mother read volume after volume, ten volumes in succession, and when she closed the last one, she shut up the book, and said, "That is the end." "Now that," said the little boy, "I call plaguy mean. If Mr. Parkman could n't write more than that, he'd better not have written at all." No sounder testimony than this could be desired.

But, after all, the man was more admirable than any of his books. His moral courage and force of will were almost

superhuman. The current of nervous energy that rushed through him was incessant day and night. The worst part of his insomnia was the surging of this force. He compares himself to "a rider whose horse runs headlong, the bit between his teeth, or a locomotive, built of indifferent material, under a head of steam too great for its strength, hissing at a score of crevices, yet rushing on with accelerating speed to the inevitable smash." "The Conspiracy of Pontiac" was written in one of these periods of nervous irritability, simply as an escape from the storm of restless energy. He must either control it or dissipate it by toil. And the difficulty of restraining these wild steeds was the severest effort of his life. And yet very few could guess what was going on in the man, for he rarely spoke of himself, never, if he could avoid it, his modesty being equal to his courage. The reserved power of his character was something tremendous; even in the most casual conversation the impression of a concealed strength was apparent. The vigor of conscience was one of his characteristics. A relative of his in a letter says: "His power of indignation with wrong was always the greatest delight to me, no less than the rare vigor in his expression of it. In this respect he is a distinct loss to the community, so few are there now who have the same keen sense of iniquity or anything like the same power of uttering it." That he had an extraordinary memory we all know. That he had an intense hatred of sham and pretences of all kinds is clearly revealed in his works; but that he was remarkable for his psychological power, his insight into human character, his judgment of public concerns, is known to few, while his kindness of heart and readiness to serve others, was revealed to those only who had occasion to avail themselves of it, as many did. One instance of this I shall never forget. The son of an old acquaintance of mine, an entire stranger to him, wanted the benefit of his knowledge of Canadian affairs. He gave it freely, had the young man at his house, lent him money, offered his literary advice, had the manuscript read to him of a book the man had written, talked it over with a friend, and did all he could to further his project; and this at a time when he was warned against mental strain.

In truth, he was a man of great depth of feeling. He was very fond of children; their innocence and frankness inter-

ested him ; their playfulness amused him. In his early life, he read a great deal of the best English prose and verse. I recollect years ago, it must have been when he was in college, at his father's house on Bowdoin Square, a question arose in regard to Dr. Johnson, and Francis expressed an idea of the Doctor's character which showed him to be familiar with his writings. This love of the best English literature he kept alive through college and all his life. He had a great enthusiasm as a youth for Milton. Shakespeare he always had by him. In mottoes prefixed to his "Vassall Morton," I find the names of thirty poets. It would not be safe, of course, to presume that he had read all these, but it is safe to say that Shakespeare, Pope, Scott, Byron, the "Percy Reliques," Sir David Lindsay, Campbell, Molière, were familiar to him. His taste was for heroic and not for sentimental writing. I should say that he might prefer the book of Proverbs to the book of Psalms ; the Gospel of Matthew to the Gospel of John ; Scott to Shelley ; for he had no relish for metaphysics or abstractions of any kind, scientific or other. His dislike of everything morbid — melancholy, — misanthropy, depression — amounted to abhorrence, and if he could not be cheerful he went away if he was able ; and if he was not, he held his tongue, or turned to merry thoughts.

His last summer was most enjoyable ; he delighted in his daughters and their children, and in the old Wentworth House at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where one of them lived. In the autumn, he came back to his beloved home at Jamaica Plain, busied himself with his flowers, and amused himself on the lake every pleasant day. He was rowing the Sunday before he died. On his return, he felt ill, gradually grew worse, and passed away on Wednesday. On Tuesday evening, he rallied so much that a surgical operation was talked of ; but on Wednesday morning all thought of that had to be given up, as he began to sink, and the hope of benefit from any such interference was abandoned. His final illness and death were the result of peritonitis. He died peacefully on the 8th of November, 1893, about noon, and spoke a few words to his nurse about ten minutes before he breathed his last. His death was in singular contrast to his life, one so quiet and easy, the other so racked with pain and so restless with energy. There was a singular felicity too in his decease.

The work of his life was done; his beautiful home in the country was soon to be destroyed in order to make way for the city park, — thus involving, as was usual with him, the sacrifice of individual pleasure for the enjoyment of multitudes.

Then rose a loud and universal voice of acclaim. He had been honored before. The St. Botolph Club, an association of literary men and artists, numbering among its earliest members some of the most distinguished of our citizens, then newly organized, chose him in January, 1880, its first President, and he continued in that office as long as his strength permitted. In 1889, Harvard College made him an LL.D.; McGill made him one in 1879; Williams, in 1885. He was Professor of Horticulture; a Fellow of Harvard College from 1875 to 1888; and twice an Overseer, in 1868 and 1874, each time for three years; a Fellow of the American Academy; an Honorary Member of the Society of Antiquarians in London; an Honorary Member of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec; a Corresponding Member of the Royal Society in Canada; and a Vice-President of the Massachusetts Historical Society. It was proposed to give his name to a new township in the county of Quebec. Mr. Parkman did nothing whatever to promote his own personal reputation, being singularly retiring, seldom seen on the streets, and never at public gatherings. He lived plainly and simply, without the least ostentation, and gave his whole interest to matters of public import, writing occasional articles, as he was able, to newspapers and magazines, when he was not employed in his own peculiar branch of study.

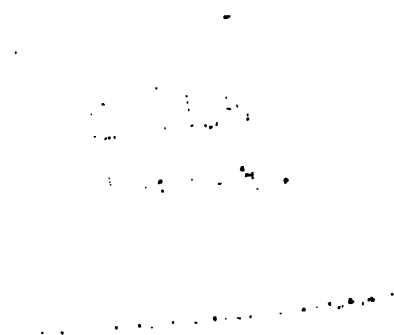
But after his decease all the honors that he had received were as nothing. There was a genuine apotheosis, a glorification, something like a canonization. He was placed by the side of the great historians of the world. He was raised to the heaven of the supreme artists in letters. Special meetings were called in his memory. The Massachusetts Historical Society held one on November 21, 1893, at which the venerable Robert C. Winthrop made a tribute of praise, and Dr. O. W. Holmes read a poem. Harvard College held another at Sanders Theatre, at which its President presided; the Horticultural Society held another; the St. Botolph Club held another; resolutions expressive of sorrow and of praise came from

several quarters. The best of all was that every expression was deserved.

It has been said, by way of disparagement, that Parkman could not have written a long, evenly sustained history like that of Hume or Gibbon or Froude or Macaulay or Green. Probably not, for every author has his own province, and Parkman seems to have demanded an element of strenuous personal life, natural, impetuous, bold, — a setting too of woodland scenery, wild and beautiful. It is quite possible also that his creative faculty may have been due to the torrent of nervous force that streamed through his organization, and which must have vent somewhere, either through the nerves that led upward or the nerves that led downward. It is quite possible that he was impelled to write, driven to toil by an irresistible necessity which compelled him to labor whether he wanted to or not; that is to say, he possessed *genius*. He obeyed his angel; he followed his star. That it shone in the sky was everything. Surely an intellectual bent is higher than an animal one. Surely it is nobler to use the fragments of life in the achievement of a mental purpose than it is to waste them in selfish indulgence, in the excitements of travel, the gratifications of appetite, or the luxury of sloth. An ordinary creature would have complained of being a victim of his temperament, would simply have given up in despair, and would have resigned himself, if he had practised resignation at all, to indolence, thanking fortune that he was in easy circumstances, and accepting the devotion of friends as if it was his right.

We must learn how to bestow aright our admiration. In the present case, our praise cannot be too loud for the man who showed us the mental and moral capabilities of human nature, nor our respect too profound for one who was able to surmount so much for our benefit. The man too certainly merits the greatest honor we can render who accepts the highest traditions of his family and carries them out, in new lines, to their perfection. A more excellent example of his type of character could not be found, — clear-headed, reasonable, sensible, moderate, sober in expectation, high-toned in principle. The Stoics never had a nobler disciple than Francis Parkman.

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